

Clinical Psychological Service Branch(CPSB)

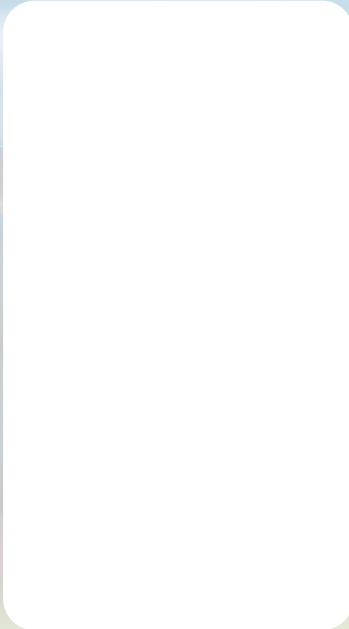
The CPSB of the Social Welfare Department(SWD) provides early psychological intervention, consultation, psychological assessment and treatment to people who have experienced critical incidents.

People seeking services from the CPSB would be referred through the Integrated family Service Centres of the SWD.

SWD hotline: 2343 2255

SWD Website: <http://www.info.gov.hk/swd>

Integrated Family Service Centres



Critical Incident – Stress Management

Clinical Psychology Service Branch



社會福利署
Social Welfare Department



Have you or your loved ones encountered or witnessed accidents, critical incidents or frightening experiences (e.g. natural disaster, fire, traffic accident, robbery, assault, and family tragedy)?

These unforeseeable critical incidents can threaten or seriously endanger our physical and psychological well-being. Having experienced or witnessed such incidents, we may have the following physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioural reactions:

Unforeseeable Accidents



- Anxiety, nervousness, fear

- Depression, guilt, self-blame



- Frequent flashbacks of details and episodes related to the critical incident, or keep paying attention to or watching relevant news reports



- Insomnia, nightmares, sleep disturbance



- Irritability, anger outbursts

- Difficulties with concentration



- Being prone to worries, difficulty in managing negative thoughts



- Loss of interest in social activities, decreased activity level



- Increased heart rate, difficulty breathing, sweating, shaky hands



- Poor appetite or disordered eating



- Avoidance of stimuli related to the critical incident

Does everyone who encountered critical incidents experience the aforementioned reactions?



It is common to experience stress reactions after encountering a critical incident. In general, these reactions may last for some time.



After the critical incident is settled, stress reactions will subside gradually, a sense of normality is resumed.



It is worth noting that if the stress reactions or emotional distress lasts for 1 month or longer with a significant impact on your daily life, you should seek professional assistance.

1

Pay attention to your own reactions, including your body sensations, feelings, and thoughts.

2

Remind yourself that having stress reactions is common after one has experienced or witnessed a critical incident.

3

Do not repeatedly watch the news or read details of the critical incident.

4

Maintain a regular routine with a balanced diet, adequate rest and physical exercise.

5

Do things that you find relaxing, such as listening to music or exercising.

6

Talk to someone you trust so that you can express your feelings and views for emotional relief.

7

Accept care and help from others. Keep contact with friends and family. Do not isolate yourself.

8

Some may rely on drugs, smoking, or alcohol to self-soothe in the hope of forgetting what they have experienced. These coping strategies cannot reduce symptoms effectively and can have a negative impact on the body and mind, they are not recommended.

What are the self-help strategies following a critical incident?